

Probe Cost Is Put at \$4 Billion

By Michael Putzel

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Investigating the Watergate scandal has cost the American taxpayer more than \$1 million and is likely to run up a tab of \$4 million or \$5 million before the case is closed.

The two agencies created specifically to look into the matter are the Senate Watergate committee, established by Senate resolution last February, and the Watergate Special Prosecution Force headed by Archibald Cox.

In addition, several prosecutors' offices and grand juries around the country and various congressional committees have probed aspects of the scandal.

By far the largest cost item for both of the special Watergate investigations has been payment of salaries to the many young and not-so-young lawyers and staff workers who have swarmed to Washington for a piece of action.

Carolyn Andrade, administrative assistant to the Senate panel, said the latest records show the committee has paid \$383,000 in staff salaries for nearly 90 workers and \$7,465 in fringe benefits. Chief counsel Samuel Dash, the highest-paid member of the staff, makes \$35,904 a year, and the salaries of more than 20 lawyers and professional investigators range from \$11,000 to \$34,000.

Cox's office, in operation only three months, has paid out \$138,000 for a still growing staff of about 80. John Barker, a spokesman for the prosecution force, said the salaries for 38 lawyers on the staff range from \$14,000

to a high of \$38,000 paid Cox.

Lower- and middle-level employees on Cox's staff are eligible for overtime if they work more than 40 hours a week, which many do. The Senate doesn't pay its employees any overtime, and a committee spokesman estimated the working day during the hearings averaged 12 hours, with many staffers working six or seven days a week.

The Senate originally al-

located \$500,000 to set up the Watergate committee and gave the panel another \$500,000 when it became clear the first appropriation would run out before the hearings end.

Miss Andrade said the panel had \$543,461 on hand Sept. 1, but Dash said recently he wouldn't rule out a trip back to the Senate to ask for more money before the committee turns in its final report next February.

Cox, who is operating out of a Justice Department contingency fund, has asked Congress for \$2.8 million for the fiscal year, and spokesmen say they expect that to be adequate for the prosecution team, which has an authorized staff strength of 90.

Barker listed the following expenses so far in addition to the prosecution staff's salaries:

Typewriters, desks and office furnishings, \$89,000; rent for two floors in a downtown Washington office building, telephone, telegraph and other communications services, \$5,000; office supplies, \$11,000; travel, \$20,000; and printing, \$950.

Miss Andrade said the Senate committee has paid for the following items:

Printing of hearings transcripts, \$25,785; witness fees and travel expenses, \$5,543; staff travel, \$11,392; consultants' fees, \$11,973; telephone, \$4,618; stationery, \$4,959; and miscellaneous, \$1,795.

The committee's costs don't include the salaries and expenses of the seven senators and their personal staffs, although some have devoted virtually full time to Watergate in recent months. And a few committee staff members are carried on other payrolls.

Salaries and expenses for the three assistant U.S. attorneys and their staff who handled the case for nearly a year before Cox was appointed are lumped into overall operating costs for the office of U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia.

These investigators would have drawn their salaries whether there was a Watergate case or not.

The same is true for the scores of FBI agents who worked on the case.